

**MVLA  
2025-26  
COURSE INFORMATION SHEET**

**Course Title:** Digital Communications II/Yearbook

**CTE Pathway Sequence:** Digital Communications - Arts, Media, and Entertainment Sector

**School:** Los Altos High School

**UC/CSU requirement:** yes/yes (f)

**MVLA Graduation requirement:** Practical Art

**Textbook and/or other learning resources:** Welcome to YBK workbook, eDesign software from Varsity Yearbook, Adobe Creative Cloud

**Course Description/Student Learning Outcomes:**

The goal of this class is to provide students with the skills necessary to design, create, build, and publish the annual Los Altos High School Yearbook. Upon completion of the course, students will:

- Design layouts for the yearbook by incorporating graphic design concepts of hierarchy, alignment, contrast, proximity using typography and color.
- Become proficient in the yearbook publisher design platform, as well as InDesign tools and Photoshop, as needed.
- Develop a unified theme to create a cohesive yearbook. The theme will extend through layouts in student life, athletics, clubs and activities, and the senior section. The theme will also be incorporated into written text, as well as student surveys.
- Develop interviewing, listening, and note-taking skills in order to generate innovative ideas for student coverage in the yearbook, and utilize web tools to bolster student involvement.
- Identify and apply the rights and the responsibilities of journalists in dealing with First Amendment issues and ethical standards.
- Recognize and create high-quality photographs using principles of art and photojournalism.
- Write clear, attention-catching captions, headlines, quick reads, and stories.
- Develop job skills working on a team, meeting deadlines, and demonstrate assertiveness, responsibility and communications skills in working with peers, staff, and members of the community.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the requirements for a career path in publishing and/or media industries.

**Course Outline/Units of Study/CTE Industry Standards(If applicable to your course):**

**Course Outline/Units of Study:**

**1. Yearbook Foundations**

○ **Objectives:**

- Understand the purpose and function of a yearbook.
- Explore the history and evolution of yearbooks.
- Identify the different roles and responsibilities within a yearbook team.
- Develop a yearbook theme and concept.

○ **CTE AME Standards Alignment:**

■ **1.0 Academics**

- 1.1 Examine history, including pioneers, innovators, and icons from diverse genres, cultures, backgrounds, and experiences.
- 1.3 Explore how narrative structure, point of view, character, conflict, theme and setting impact story development
- 1.4 Apply principles of art, design, and composition to creative works (i.e., contrast, movement, color theory, scale, visual hierarchy, symmetry, anatomy, perspective, form, positive and negative space, etc.)

■ **2.0 Communication**

- 2.1 Understand how to effectively code-switch, communicate information, and clearly articulate ideas in different types of professional and educational environments.
- 2.2 Use industry-appropriate terminology appropriately (i.e., technology, tools, equipment, stage directions, camera directions, venue terminology, etc.) when discussing projects, writing proposals, and presenting work.

■ **9.0 Collaboration and Teamwork**

- 9.1 Collaborate with a team to realize, refine, finalize, and launch a creative project.
- 9.2 Behave respectfully and contribute to an inclusive team environment.

- **10.0 Creative Process**
  - 10.1 Create physical and mental conditions that allow for creative inspiration and exploration.
  - 10.2 Use research, imagery, and creative inspiration to generate a mood board or concept document to develop ideas.
  - 10.3 Visualize thinking using different creative methods (i.e., storytelling, experimentation, improvisation, illustration, sketching, collage, photography, storyboarding, words, etc.)
- **13.0 Business and Marketing**
  - 13.1 Develop and present stories that demonstrate the value of a product, service, or experience.
  - 13.2 Pitch an original concept with a visual presentation and engaging narrative

## 2. Photography and Image Editing

- **Objectives:**
  - Understand the basics of photography, including composition, lighting, and exposure.
  - Learn how to use a camera and capture high-quality images
  - Explore different photography styles and techniques
  - Use image editing software to enhance and crop photos
- **CTE AME Standards Alignment:**
  - **1.0 Academics**
    - **1.4:** Apply principles of art, design, and composition to creative works (i.e., contrast, movement, color theory, scale, visual hierarchy, symmetry, anatomy, perspective, form, positive and negative space, etc.)
  - **4.0 Technology**
    - 4.3: Use job-specific hardware/software for workflows and delivery of content to various platforms.
  - **10.0 Creative Process**
    - 10.4: Develop and bring concepts to life through iterative processes (i.e., mock-ups, prototypes, performance, etc.)
    - 10.5: Solve industry-specific creative challenges, accept critique, and apply feedback to improve skills.
  - **15.0 Media Content Creation**
    - 15.5: Use angles, composition, framing, shots, and editing to enhance visual storytelling
    - 15.8: Review content to identify and resolve problems, ensure seamless transitions, and maximize the audience's experience
  - **17.0 Digital Communications: Skill Building**
    - DC.18.1: Apply techniques to record content for various platforms, including camera and/or microphone selection and placement

## 2. Content Gathering and Storytelling

- **Objectives:**
  - Plan and conduct interviews
  - Write engaging and informative articles
  - Capture high-quality photographs that tell a story
  - Use captions and quotes effectively
- **CTE AME Standards Alignment:**
  - **2.0 Communication**
    - 2.4 Speak extemporaneously and professionally when interviewing and/or presenting creative work
    - 2.6 Demonstrate proficiency in various writing styles (i.e., reflective, narrative, informational, persuasive, and copywriting) and write industry-specific reports in a clear and concise manner
  - **5.0 Critical Thinking and Problem Solving**
    - 5.2 Analyze and interpret information received from various sources to assess bias and discern the credibility, quality and value of information collected online and credibility
    - 5.3 Use reflection and feedback to iterate when solving problems and exploring ideas for creative development
  - **10.0 Creative Process**
    - 10.4 Develop and bring concepts to life through iterative processes (i.e., mock-ups, prototypes, performance, etc.)
    - 10.5 Solve industry-specific creative challenges, accept critique, and apply feedback to improve skills
  - **11.0 Research and Media Literacy**

- 11.2 Gather information and develop perspective through research, interviews, observation, and experience
- 11.3 Properly cite source information using appropriate formats (AP Style)
- **15.0 Media Content Creation**
  - 15.1 Tell engaging and compelling stories using a variety of artistic mediums and/or media formats
  - 15.2 Develop original content for a specific media platform based on format, length, and audience
  - 15.3 Clearly communicate a story using different industry-specific methods (i.e., outline, script, rundown, treatment, synopsis, etc.) prior to capturing or creating content
- **17.0 Digital Communications: Skill Building**
  - DC.17.1 Study background information to prepare for programs or interviews
  - DC.17.2 Select content based on community interests, audience preference and/or requests from the public

### 3. Design and Layout

- **Objectives:**
  - Understand the principles of graphic design and layout
  - Use industry-standard software for yearbook design
  - Create visually appealing and balanced layouts
  - Incorporate the yearbook theme and concept into the design
- **CTE AME Standards Alignment:**
  - **1.0 Academics**
    - 1.4 Apply principles of art, design, and composition to creative works (i.e., contrast, movement, color theory, scale, visual hierarchy, symmetry, anatomy, perspective, form, positive and negative space, etc.)
  - **4.0 Technology**
    - 4.3 Use job-specific hardware/software for workflows and delivery of content to various platforms
  - **10.0 Creative Process**
    - 10.4 Develop and bring concepts to life through iterative processes (i.e., mock-ups, prototypes, performance, etc.)
    - 10.5 Solve industry-specific creative challenges, accept critique, and apply feedback to improve skills
  - **15.0 Media Content Creation**
    - 15.8 Review content to identify and resolve problems, ensure seamless transitions, and maximize the audience's experience

### 4. Production, Marketing and Distribution

- **Objectives:**
  - Understand the yearbook production process
  - Prepare files for printing
  - Market and promote the yearbook
  - Distribute the yearbook to the school community
- **CTE AME Standards Alignment:**
  - **4.0 Technology**
    - 4.5 Apply rendering and exporting techniques to comply with industry standards
    - 4.6 Use industry-standard asset tracking, file naming conventions and storage/back-up protocols
  - **12.0 Audience and Behavior**
    - 12.3 Examine the role of audience and market research in marketing and distribution of creative works
  - **13.0 Business and Marketing**
    - 13.3 Develop and/or maintain a visually compelling and appropriate set of branded elements for a product, service, or experience
    - 13.4 Explore content monetization using different social media, distribution, and streaming platforms
    - 13.5 Create and/or adhere to a project and/or production budget
  - **14.0 Legal Responsibility**
    - 14.2 Adhere to terms of use, including copyright laws and regulations
    - 14.3 Appropriately cite proprietary information

### 5. Yearbook Showcase and Reflection

- **Objectives:**
  - Present the finished yearbook to the school community
  - Reflect on the yearbook creation process and identify areas for improvement
  - Create professional portfolio of work

- Celebrate the accomplishments of the yearbook team
- **CTE AME Standards Alignment:**
  - **2.0 Communication**
    - 2.4 Speak extemporaneously and professionally when interviewing and/or presenting creative work
  - **5.0 Critical Thinking and Problem Solving**
    - 5.3 Use reflection and feedback to iterate when solving problems and exploring ideas for creative development

**Assessment and Grading ([BP 5121](#) / [AR 5121](#)):** To ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their learning, the course instructors implement aligned grading practices and common assessments with the same frequency.

1. Grading categories and their percentage weights:
  - Production/Deadlines: 60%
  - Employability: 20%
  - Homework/Classwork/ Quizzes: 20%
2. Achievement evidence collected within each grading category:
 

Expectations for Production & Deadlines:

  - Complete all assigned modules and spreads
  - Take part in classroom discussions and brainstorm sessions
  - Participate in after-school and weekend events as needed (advance notice will be given)
  - Incorporates feedback and demonstrates growth throughout semester and in final reflection/portfolio.

Photograph, Design, and Copy Quality:

  - Applies aesthetic and design concepts for photography
  - Incorporates feedback and demonstrates growth
  - Design to the proper specifications detailed in the style guide
  - Names and captions are completed for all photos
  - Photos adhere to style guide regulations (action vs. passive shots)
  - Meets the standards for journalistic excellence
  - Shows careful attention to detail and timely submission
  - Incorporates feedback and demonstrates growth

Expectations for Employability

  - Demonstrate positive work habits: arriving in class on time, staying on task with yearbook activities, communication with peers and teacher
3. Grading scales:
 

A+	99 -100	C	73-76
A	93-98	C-	70-72
A-	90-92	D+	67-69
B+	87-89	D	63-66
B	83-86	D-	60-62
B-	80-82	F	50-59
C+	77-79		
4. Homework/outside of class practices ([AR 6154](#)):
 

Students enrolled in Yearbook are expected to participate fully during class, as many learning activities and stories will be due before the end of the class block. Work not completed in class should be worked on at home. Additional time outside of class will be required for interviewing, reporting and shooting at various school and community-related events.
5. Excused absence make up practices ([Education Code 48205\(b\)](#)):
 

Students are expected to connect with the adviser when they are absent and inform us of their module status and any other work in progress. Excused absences do not automatically provide a student with an excuse from an assignment or an extension for a deadline. If a student has work due on a day they are absent, they must communicate with the Advisor immediately. Deadlines are critical to the successful publication of the yearbook and can be costly if missed.

6. Academic integrity violation practices ([LAHS Academic Integrity Policy](#)):  
Honesty, trust and integrity are vital components of the education process. The Governing Board believes that academic honesty and personal integrity are fundamental components of a student's education and character development. The Board expects that students will not cheat, lie, plagiarize or commit other acts of academic dishonesty. Students and families should understand and act upon the values of academic integrity and should encourage the highest standards of academic behavior from themselves and their peers. It is expected that all work completed for a class is original work created for that class, for a specific assignment. Violations of academic integrity will be dealt with in a manner consistent with the MVLA-LAHS Academic Integrity Policy. Additionally, please refer to the LAHS English Department's [addendum](#) to the schoolwide integrity policy for more information about how violations of academic integrity will be handled.
7. Late work practices:  
Deadlines and timeliness are essential components of the yearbook. We will discuss timelines, workflow and how to make sure work is turned in on time extensively in class. Because our yearbook is directly tied to specific deadlines set by our publisher, any spread that fails to meet the deadline will only be eligible for half credit. Any spread that is not complete by the second class after the deadline will receive no credit and can be reassigned. Missing deadlines are extremely costly for the yearbook and can severely hurt your grade.
8. Revision practices:  
Modules and double-page spreads will have specific grading criteria. Students will have access to the grading rubric for each assignment in advance. In the beginning of the course, students will receive a draft grade for their modules/spreads and be given an opportunity to improve on their work. As spreads increase in frequency and training is deemed complete, students will be expected to turn in high quality work the first time the spread is due with no opportunity for revision.
9. Extra credit practices:  
There are no extra credit opportunities for this course. All students are expected to contribute their part to completing the yearbook.
10. Additional grading practices:  
Students who are unsure of the expectations for their work should speak to the adviser and editors as soon as possible before a deadline to receive help. After the deadline, any work that needs to be fixed by an editor or an adviser may receive a grade deduction.
11. LMS used: Google Classroom

**Instructors' email addresses:**

Jodi Hwang, [jodi.hwang@mvla.net](mailto:jodi.hwang@mvla.net)

**Additional information:**

This class is taught by a Career Technical Education certified teacher in Arts, Media, and Entertainment.

Writing and photography published in the Los Altos High School yearbook will follow current laws governing publication of information by student journalists (California Ed Code 48907), will reflect responsible journalistic reporting standards and practices, and will follow the following criteria:

As with all journalists, students will not publish or disseminate material that:

- Is obscene or libelous, according to the current legal definition.
- Creates a clear and present danger or immediate material and substantial physical disruption of school.
- Is an invasion of privacy, according to legal standards.
- Advertises illegal products or services, as currently defined by legal definition.
- Breaks the law or policies that are established in the student handbook.
- Writing will not include offensive or distasteful content as determined by the editor(s) working in conjunction with the advisor.
- Profanity is considered beneath the writing caliber of the yearbook staff. Innuendo will not be tolerated.
- Source material that may be considered offensive will be evaluated by the editors working in conjunction with the adviser.